

the Afghan ministries. Nonetheless, he is confident of military success. With the lives and security of so many at stake, it is important that the Obama administration follow the best military advice. So far in Afghanistan, this is precisely what the President has done, and he deserves a lot of credit for it.

During the recess, President Obama submitted a supplemental appropriations request to fund the war efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Republicans will aggressively support our combat forces just as we did in the last Congress. In the coming months and years, Congress will continue to play an essential role in preserving and extending the security gains our service men and women have made in Iraq and in fighting the Taliban and al-Qaida in Afghanistan. By approving President Obama's request for war funding, we will provide our men and women in uniform with resources they need to complete their missions and return home with honor.

This is a solemn duty, and Members of Congress should resist the temptation to use these war funding requests as an opportunity to fund unrelated projects. The President's war funding request should be used for its intended purpose; that is, the national defense.

In that vein, this war spending bill falls short in one important respect. It requests up to \$80 million for the purpose of shuttering the secure detention facility at Guantanamo Bay before the administration has a place to put the roughly 240 inmates who live there. The administration has sought to mollify our critics overseas by saying it will transfer the inmates at Guantanamo in a matter of months. The administration should, instead, be assuring the American people that these inmates will not be transferred to American soil or allowed to return to the battlefield—an assurance that so far the new administration has not been able to give.

This is an extremely important issue. As the clock runs out on the administration's plan to shut down Guantanamo within the next 9 months, Americans are paying closer and closer attention to what this means for them. It is one thing to announce the goal of closing this facility; it is quite another to set an arbitrary date for closure before anyone has even come up with a safe alternative. The administration hasn't even been able to assure us that these 240 detainees will not be scattered across the United States. Indeed, when it comes to Guantanamo, the administration doesn't seem to have any plan at all for dealing with men whom many consider to be the most dangerous terrorists alive. Meanwhile, Guantanamo has provided Americans with a high degree of safety and certainty. Of the 800 terrorists who have been held there over the years, not a single one has ever escaped to harm anyone. Not one has escaped to harm anyone.

In the days ahead, Republicans will remind the American people about the

dangers of closing Guantanamo without a safe alternative—and prod the administration to rethink its strategy in the same way the President has rethought his campaign proposals on Iraq. In the end, the safety of the American people is of far more important concern than pleasing our foreign critics, many of whom have been far quicker to criticize our detention policies than they have been in offering a hand in adjusting them. On Guantanamo, it is increasingly important that we get the policy right and put the politics aside. If it does so, the administration can expect strong bipartisan support.

RESTORING FISCAL BALANCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the President has announced today he is directing the members of his Cabinet to cut wasteful Government spending. Obviously, I applaud such an effort, but it is important that we not lose sight of the enormity of our current spending and debt levels, which will only really be addressed through major, bipartisan, politically difficult reforms. The Cabinet has been asked to find \$100 million savings in a \$4 trillion budget. Any amount of savings, obviously, is welcome, but according to the Congressional Budget Office numbers, that is about the average amount we will spend every single day—that \$100 million is about the average amount we will spend every single day just covering the interest on the stimulus package we passed earlier this year.

We need to cut waste, but we will need to do much more to restore fiscal balance. Senators GREGG and CONRAD have proposed a plan that would force us to get debt and spending under control. It deserves our serious attention. I yield the floor.

FRAUD ENFORCEMENT AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2009—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to S. 386, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to consider S. 386, a bill to improve enforcement of mortgage fraud, securities fraud, financial institution fraud, and other frauds related to federal assistance and relief programs, for the recovery of funds lost to these frauds, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, how much time is there on S. 386?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont has 87 minutes.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, under the normal circumstances, I would speak as chairman of the Judiciary Committee and as the chief sponsor of this bill. Then we would go, by normal protocol, to either the Republican ranking member or the senior Republican who

is cosponsor, which I assume will be done.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Delaware, Mr. KAUFMAN, be recognized next. I ask further unanimous consent that at the completion of my statement, if there is no member of the Republican party seeking recognition, Senator KAUFMAN be recognized; if there is a member of the Republican party seeking recognition on this bill, that, of course, they be recognized first, and then the next person to be recognized be Senator KAUFMAN.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this afternoon we begin consideration of the bipartisan Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act. What this does is to strengthen the Federal Government's capacity to investigate and prosecute the kinds of financial frauds that have so severely undermined our economy; that not only undermined our economy, they have hurt so many people in this country.

It is going to give the resources and the legal tools needed to police and deter fraud. We have massive recovery efforts now being implemented. But if we do not go after those who are committing fraud against people in this country, much of that effort is going to be wasted.

I commend the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY, our lead cosponsor, for his contributions to this package, and his dedication to protecting taxpayer funds by deterring, investigating, and prosecuting fraud. He worked with me to write this bill. He has been a leader on this legislation every step of the way.

I thank our many cosponsors for their steadfast support for this effort. Senator SCHUMER has not only supported this measure but has also introduced additional legislative proposals with Senator SHELBY. Senator KAUFMAN is an original cosponsor and has been a strong ally. He has spoken and written about the need for fraud enforcement all year. Senator KLOBUCHAR has participated throughout the course of Judiciary Committee consideration of this bill. As former prosecutors, she and I both know how important it is to have sufficient resources on the ground committed to deterring and discovering these devastating crimes. More recently, we have been joined in our efforts by the ranking Republican on the Judiciary Committee, another former prosecutor and friend, Senator SPECTER, and by Senators SNOWE, HARKIN, LEVIN, DORGAN, WHITEHOUSE, BAYH, SHAHEEN, and MURRAY.

It is a bipartisan effort. And, actually, if you are going to go after people committing crimes and fraud, you should not consider it a Democratic or a Republican effort; this is a bipartisan effort. And we ought to be able to do it, because those who are committing the frauds did not ask if the person they are going to defraud is a Republican or